

## FLYING HIGH AND PROUD HISTORIC FLAGS GRACE OLD TOWN HALL

Visitors to Old Town Hall may notice something different about the American flag flying above their heads. In keeping with the historic nature of the site, the City is flying historic versions of the U.S. flag on a new, recently installed flagpole.

The flags will be rotated periodically. The 1858 version of the flag marks Minnesota's statehood and features 32 stars. The 1912 flag, featuring 48 stars, was the official U.S. flag for 47 years until 1959. According to Recreation Supervisor Mark Morrison, the 1891 flag, which has 44 stars, will be featured most often. (See right.)

"The 1891 version of the American flag is the flag that was actively used in the U.S. during the time of Old Town Hall's original construction in 1892," Morrison said. "The other two flags will be used for special programs and to mark historical events."

Morrison said the flags are important because each one represents a different period in Bloomington and Minnesota history.

"This is really providing a unique opportunity for the public to see firsthand more than 150 years of U.S. flag history here in Bloomington," he said.



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## AMERICAN BOULEVARD LRT STATION DEBUTS LONG-AWAITED STATION IS NOW OPEN TO COMMUTERS



The American Boulevard Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station at 34th Avenue opened to frigid temperatures at its December ribbon-cutting, making it a welcome alternative for people looking to use transit for a faster, safer commute.

The last of 19 stations on the Hiawatha LRT line, the American Boulevard Station has been a long time coming. The plan for the station was

postponed to help with the cost of a major route modification that placed the terminal station in the Mall of America's east parking ramp, although the footprint for the American Boulevard Station was kept in the original construction.

In 2005, the City and the Metropolitan Council applied for a federal grant to help fund the construction of the American Boulevard Station. The grant was awarded and construction commenced in spring 2009.

With separate structures for southbound and northbound riders, American Boulevard Station is the only split platform station on the Hiawatha Line. The platform is designed to accommodate three LRT cars.

The American Boulevard LRT Station is part of a bigger vision for the area east of TH-77. Bloomington's Director of Community Development Larry Lee said the City's vision for the area around the station is for a new, transit-oriented residential neighborhood with five to seven thousand residents.

McGough Development owns a 43-acre parcel surrounding the Bloomington Central LRT Station. In

2005, the City approved a development plan that includes 1,100 transit-oriented residential units. Of those residential dwellings, 263 are in the existing Reflections condominium buildings.

"McGough's approved plans show 1,100 residential units on the Bloomington Central Station site. The City expects up to 1,900 additional residences to be developed on other parcels within walking distance of the American Boulevard and Bloomington Central stations," Lee said.

Senior Civil Engineer Schane Rudlang, one of many City employees who worked on the project, said although there were some challenges getting the signal timing coordinated between vehicle traffic and the LRT, the project went very smoothly.

"It was rewarding to contribute on a project that completes the original vision for the LRT in Bloomington," Rudlang said.

The station took six months to construct. Money to build the new station came from the Bloomington Port Authority, Hennepin County, the Metropolitan Council and the federal government.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED HAVE FUN WHILE IMPROVING THE LIVES OF OTHERS

Make a positive impact in your community through volunteerism. Human Services has a variety of opportunities to connect you to your community through meaningful volunteer jobs. Opportunities exist to work with youth, families, multicultural communities and people with disabilities. For more information, call Human Services at 952-563-8733 or TTY 952-563-8740.

## 2009 HEALTH PROMOTION AWARD FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE RECOGNIZED



The 2009 Health Promotion Award was recently presented to Friendship Village, a senior living community in Bloomington, for its ongoing efforts to promote physical fitness to residents through its Six Dimensional Wellness program. Friendship Village has engaged more than 300 residents in fitness classes since the program began.

The Health Promotion Award recognizes an individual, business or organization that has made a difference in the health and wellness of Bloomington residents.

For more information, call Public Health at 952-563-8919.

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